

Activities: Paddling Exercises

Water Obstacles

Modified from *Kayak and Canoe Games*, Laurie Guillion, Menasha Ridge Press

Overview:

Students practice different paddling strokes to get through an obstacle course.

Associated Objectives:

- ☐ Students will become familiar with basic strokes for canoeing or kayaking and demonstrate their ability to use them.

Time:

30 – 45 minutes

Materials:

Canoe or kayak, paddles, PFDs, buoys or other “obstacles”

Directions:

Review paddling strokes discussed in “Basic Strokes” in the **Canoe Paddling** or **Kayak Paddling** section of the *Background Information*. Create an obstacle course on a pond or lake using natural features or buoys. Create rules for each obstacle (e.g. paddlers must circle buoy, paddlers must paddle forward between the dock and overhanging tree and backward to get out, etc.). Have students practice the course. Time paddlers to see how quickly they can get through. Provide assistance or feedback if paddlers need help.

Evaluation:

Students should be able to identify which strokes work best in different situations.

Extensions:

Have students paddle the course backward.

Have three people per canoe.

Have each craft carry an object on the front of the craft. If the object falls off, they must start over.

Vary the tasks during different runs of the course. For example, the first run may have paddlers circle a buoy, while the next may have paddlers paddle backwards around a buoy.

Have students mimic another paddler’s style of paddling during a section of the course. This may allow discovery of new, effective paddling strokes.

Paddle the perimeter of a lake or pond viewing every dock, overhanging tree, etc. as an obstacle. As paddlers become more acquainted with strokes, they should try missing the obstacles with as small of margin as possible.